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CHAS. M. MEATHAM

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SATURDAY, NOV. 18

Along with other surprises came
the election of a Democratic Senator
in Rhode Island.

Recounts have been ordered in two
Congressional districts in West Vir-
ginia and one in New Jersey, in which
Democrats lost by a few votes.

Incompleted canvasses of the vote
in several close congressional districts
have brought no change in the unoffi-
cial election returns which indicate
that 217 Republicans, 212 Democrats
and six other parties have been elect-
ed to the Sixty-fifth Congress.

The members of the General Asso-
ciation of Baptists in Kentucky at
Louisville pledged themselves to sup-
port for state and local offices only
such candidates as will agree to work
for the submission of a constitutional
amendment prohibiting the liquor
traffic. Action on the resolution was
unanimous.

Mrs. Wexler, head of the Washing-
ton Birth Control League, is to pre-
side at a meeting in that city Novem-
ber 17 in the interest of the dissemi-
nation of birth control literature. The
league is working to secure the
repeal of legislation which prohibits
sending such literature through the
mails.

The high cost of chickens in New
York has been reduced 7 cents a
pound as a result of the voluntary
dissolution of the so-called poultry
trust, it was announced there at the
district attorneys office, which invest-
igated the recent jump in prices and
threatened prosecution under the
anti-trust law of New York state.

The growing demand for lumber in
England and the shortage of labor
have resulted in the invention of a
tree-felling machine which is said to
perform more work in an eight-hour
day than 30 woodmen. A feature of
the machine is the cleanness of the
cut and the closeness to the ground at
which the saw works, leaving no
stumps standing and thus preventing
waste.

If the election of President were
thrown into the House of Representa-
tives, Charles E. Hughes would be
elected irrespective of the results of
the election last Tuesday. The Con-
stitution provides that each state shall
have one vote, when it devolves upon
the House to elect a President. There
are 24 state delegations controlled by
Republicans, 20 by the Democrats,
two are evenly divided and two are
of such complexion that their vote
would be in doubt. This division
would give the Republicans control
of the election. Perhaps this explains
why Hughes is so slow to admit his
defeat.

There will be no lapse in the ser-
vice of President Wilson because of
the fact that on March 4, next, inaugu-
ration day falls on Sunday, accord-
ing to an opinion reached at the state
department. It became known to-
day that on account of reports that a
lapse would occur and that Secretary
Lansing would be acting president on
March 4, a form letter explaining the
law, has been prepared at the state
department to be sent out in answer
to inquiries on the question. While it
is not expected that the formal inaugu-
ration of Mr. Wilson will be held
until Monday, March 5, he will be de-
clared by Secretary Lansing to take
the oath of office on Sunday.

TOBACCO GROWERS

A Statement From F. G. Ewing, General Manager, With Reference to the Planters' Protective Association.

"Glenraven,"
Cedar Hill, Tenn., Nov. 15, 1916.

Tobacco growers who signed the
contract of the Planters' Protective As-
sociation for the seasons of 1916-1917-
1918, which specified a minimum of
\$5,000 acres, are hereby released from
obligation thereunder. Said contracts
are null and void from this date. Such
as have not been forwarded to the
General Secretary should be destroyed
by District Chairmen. Those at head-
quarters will be destroyed there forth-
with.

Thus an institution which was cre-
ated to perform the function of an in-
surance company, advancing and sus-
taining reasonable prices for tobacco,
and which has for a number of years
contributed materially to the prosper-
ity of the dark tobacco district of
Kentucky and Tennessee, passes from
the scene.

It is not improbable that tobacco
which has been pledged as above
might have been sold through the as-
sociation sales rooms at a better aver-
age price than can be obtained other-
wise. But representations have been
made by certain buyers, and loose
floor interests, and have been tenta-
tively accepted as reliable by the mass
of growers in their individual capac-
ity, to the effect that there will be
spirited demand for tobacco at satis-
factory prices this season.

If such representations prove de-
pendable, a co-operative sales agency
would be unnecessary. But in view
of the past, and especially as a large
number of loyal members are affected
perhaps a statement as to the reasons
for a discontinuance of co-operative
sales is due.

The following are considerations:

(a) Having accomplished satisfac-
torily the purpose for which the asso-
ciation was created.

(b) Fulfilling its own obligations
meanwhile, moral, physical, financial,
winning the respect of the commercial
world and tobacco buyers.

(c) Having resources sufficient to
re-establish and continue co-operative
sales.

(d) A discontinuance of sales is,
despite the protest of many substan-
tial growers and citizens.

See Auditor's reports herewith of
the aggregate of business and prices
obtained year by year.

While the estimate of four cents
average throughout the dark tobacco
district is an approximate, it was
admitted as reliable, and conservative,
because a number of prominent buy-
ers say that it was above their aver-
age for 1905.

Association sales since have been as
follows:

1904. 24,707 hogsheads, \$6.67 aver-
age price.
1905. 24,628 hogsheads, \$7.12 aver-
age price.
1906. 29,079 hogsheads, \$8.84 aver-
age price.
1907. 60,417 hogsheads, \$8.54 aver-
age price.
1908. 53,676 hogsheads, \$7.04 aver-
age price.
1909. 24,319 hogsheads, \$10.00 aver-
age price.
1910. 35,252 hogsheads, \$9.75 aver-
age price.
1911. 29,337 hogsheads, \$9.48 aver-
age price.
1912. 36,581 hogsheads, \$8.41 aver-
age price.
1913. 28,381 hogsheads, \$9.35 aver-
age price.

Of the 1913 crop, which is the last
sold formally through association
sales rooms, notwithstanding assist-
ance was rendered growers, informally—

6,500 hogsheads sold above 12c.
6,900 hogsheads sold from 10c to 12c.
6,800 hogsheads sold from 8c to 10c.
3,100 hogsheads sold below 8c.

Various reasons have been assigned
for an alleged failure of the associa-
tion to maintain its one time strength
and prestige, for instance:

(a) That growers, as a class, fail
to sustain the theory and principle of
co-operative sales.

(b) That in this progressive age,
ten years is the limit of probability for
an organization of farmers to survive
without a change of purpose, or meth-
ods of accomplishing such purpose.

(c) That growers lost confidence
in the stability of the association the
year of the so-called re-grading (1907).

(d) That growers had become so
prosperous, they have forgotten their
distress of ten or a dozen years ago,
and find system and discipline oppres-
sive.

(e) That save for an element
consisting in part perhaps of admir-
able citizens who counsel in their own
bosoms participating little in public
affairs, of highly prejudiced, irritable
men and of negative men, a large ma-
jority of growers who have not sus-
tained the organization, desire its ex-
istence, but desire that others sustain
it, thus enabling them to avoid com-
missions, storage charges, deprecia-
tion in weight while awaiting sales,
etc., etc.

Let us say that criticism of growers
for short-sighted disloyalty in failing
to sustain the association and criticism
of the management for a depreciation
of early standards of efficiency in
handling this immense business is
evenly divided, notwithstanding the
former occasioned the latter.

If there must be something for the
"wiseacres" to chew, other than toba-
cco, or a rag, we might as well "let it
go at that."

There is enough of truth in what is
herewith suggested for serious thought
or discussion, and there are other
things of greater weight which have
not been thought of.

In every revolutionary movement of
a populace where the strength of a
mature manhood is organized and
brought to the fore, whether such con-
tent possess an element of blood and
thunder, of intellectuality or commer-
cialism, the importance of reckoning

the strength and extent of prepared-
ness of the opposing side is quickly ap-
parent. The strategist is almost in-
variably the successful contestant.

As a commander of troops, he may
not be dashing and fearless. The fear-
less man may present a picture of sub-
lime heroism, but may sacrifice hun-
dreds of soldiers needlessly.

Strategy is the prime factor in a suc-
cessful contest. There have been from
the beginning of this contest, and are
still, splendid strategists directing the
course of the buying interests, and if
dollars represent soldiers in a more
sanguinary affair, it may be said not
one dollar will be sacrificed needlessly
by the buying interests.

The association made a brilliant and
successful assault upon the first lines
of a powerful and apparently perfectly
systematized buying aggregation,
striking a staggering blow, cutting off
sources of supply effectively. The
buying interests could not "counter."

From an aspect of a contest for su-
premaccy of the market, notwithstanding
the source of money supply, is the
accepted point of vantage, the associa-
tion vanquished the buying interests
the first season of its existence.

If they had continued to oppose its
advance with the same tactics they
met its first assault, victory for the
grower would have been complete and
permanent. But instead of continuing
to contest prices on the basis of a low-
est possible buying average, as, for
instance, four cents before we were or-
ganized, we find our wily antagonists
combating the association with a rep-
resentation of paying more for tobacco
than it has received or may be asked.

After paying interest on borrowed
money, insurance, storage, suffering
depreciation in weight, and having to-
bacco tied up six months, the grower
is confronted with an interrogatory:
Was the net result of association sales
more, or less satisfactory than spot
cash for loose tobacco through other
channels? But if the first assault was
all the association ever accomplished,
to rout a market system, which was
iniquitous, dominated absolutely by
buying interests, and which enabled
them to secure our product below cost
of production, to install instead, a new
system, which put the industry on an
up-to-date basis and put the grower on
his feet with an even start, its bene-
fits could only be reckoned by millions
of dollars.

But for the buying interests to have
neither apology nor explanation of
their one-time starvation prices, stand-
ing with heads erect, and an expres-
sion of proud and admirable citizen-
ship, may be, is to say the least of it,
progressive. However, a great dis-
play of money whitewashes many of-
fenses, and often makes memory a
blank as to past injury or injustice.

Suddenly we found as great a pleth-
ora of money as there was once a
dearth of it. We found tobacco which
we were once told was a sore drag on
the market, with a heartrending song
"overproduction," in very lively de-
mand. But still more remarkable,
there are many growers who think it
idle to discuss events which promoted a
more prosperous era.

Progressiveness to many men means
to avail of the best opportunity within
the law; hence many availed of the
strategy and progressiveness of buying
interests which realized the price
must be advanced quickly and materi-
ally. It was the "bird in hand worth
two in the bush" to such growers.

Growers received a cordial invita-
tion to take a seat on the highly up-
holstered, brilliantly illuminated, rub-
ber tired band wagon of the buying
interests with a siren horn, and many
of them did so. The buying interests
with the keenest strategy have seen to
it that when the association was oper-
ating to full efficiency with the sup-
port of only one-third of the growers,
an accurate comparison of prices, es-
pecially when the grades of any two
crops was taken into careful consid-
eration, was practically impossible.

But it would be folly to think of past
efficiency sustaining an association as
of today. Business rules this universe,
and business is heartless, business has
no memory for unprogressive things;
everything worth considering had a for-
ward tendency. The tobacco buying
business is neither more or less cold
or greedy than other business, but it
is among the most powerful in the
world. Unless it can be proven to be
a large majority of tobacco growers that
the association will still enable them
to progress, it is utterly impossible
for it to survive. It cannot progress
or even hold its own unless growers
supply a sufficiency of tobacco. One-
third in the association and two-thirds
outside will not suffice. The buying
interests have not been idle, while
many friendly disposed growers have
assumed that their management would
pull them across somehow. There is
not sufficient sentiment involved to
inspire a management consisting of
practically five hundred men to toll
day in and day out from year to year,
when the good it is accomplishing is
either not comprehended or not appre-
ciated.

There are some, indeed, there are a
great many growers and other citi-
zens who demand an exalted ideal for
the association, believing a sentiment
to be connected with its great achieve-
ment of a dozen years ago, and its sub-
stantial protection of our chief indus-
try for a number of years thereafter,
in the advanced price, should make us
revere its name and salute its banner,
the emblem of our great economic de-
liverance. The sentiment is worthy,
it is excellent.

There is no doubt of the associa-
tion's doubling the price of tobacco,
and sustaining it practically through-
out the time of the existence of its
sales department. Neither is there a
shadow of doubt of its having made
and sustained an advanced price for
the non-association man. The buying
interests had been made aware of
what was to them a very dangerous
drift. They had seen the price of to-
bacco doubled, and reckoning the sit-
uation from that, it was a matter of
their defeating a further advance.
There was no longer a probability of
their antagonizing a grower by offer-
ing an apparently lower price than as-
sociation men were receiving.

Henceforth their purpose was to
conciliate growers, and to conciliate
those who remembered that they had
sold tobacco to them at a four-cent
average, while the association had

more recently sustained an eight-cent
average meant that they must offer
something positively attractive.

Moreover, there were thousands of
growers who thought it disloyal to the
association to show their crops or re-
ceive a bid which did not come
through the association's sales depart-
ment. The buying interests also want-
ed to impress these men with what
they were doing.

It is manifest that under such con-
ditions, the buying interests which re-
quired and expected to procure the en-
tire product of the season ultimately,
could not afford to have two prices. As
soon as a few sales had been effected
by the association, its prices were
known, and notwithstanding the buy-
ing interests discriminated against as-
sociation tobacco as to time, not buy-
ing it until they had exhausted every
other source of supply, they would
scarcely wish to have it appear they
bought tobacco from non-association
men at one price, subsequently buying
association tobacco at another and
better price. So the suggested strat-
egy was in making it appear associa-
tion and non-association prices were
running "neck and neck."

But by having buyers who had tech-
nical knowledge of tobacco, the grow-
er, without technical knowledge, was
at a disadvantage. It must be evident
that the purpose of the buying inter-
ests was to satisfy the non-association
man by comparison with association
prices.

There has been no other agency of
influence at work to advance and sus-
tain prices.

But in the two seasons since the as-
sociation's sale department has been
discontinued, we observe the price of
tobacco declined to below cost of pro-
duction or approximately 5 1/2c per
pound, now demanding last season's
profits to buyers were exceptionally
good.

It has frequently been said that in-
dividual growers have remarked they
would prefer to sell their tobacco at
8 cents in November or December than
at 8 cents the following May or June.
It is unthinkable that an American
citizen could take this view of a busi-
ness proposition, and especially in
view of the fact that the association
arranged to advance 60 per cent of
the market value of tobacco at 8 per
cent and was in position to show that
the 60 per cent was more than had
been gotten for the tobacco before
there was an association.

It might be said of the man who is
wedded to the idea of bringing his to-
bacco to market in the morning, and
carrying his check home at night in
view of the average price every season
yet experienced that "Uncle Isaac" of
3 Gold Balls fame is still doing busi-
ness, advancing money in the spring
on the winter overcoat, and in the win-
ter on the whole summer outfit. It is
always cash.

But what it was desired to impress
upon growers was that 8 cents as of 6
or 10 years ago was as much as 10 or
12 cents today, and that by the proper
support on the part of growers it
would be much easier to add 2 cents
to the best average price ever obtained
by the association than it was to dou-
ble the price in the beginning, and at
6 per cent interest instead of 8 per
cent, as was done when it had sale
control of 50,000 to 60,000 hogsheads.
Moreover, the discrimination against
association tobacco as to time of buy-
ing, which would be impossible if the
association had sale control of two-
thirds of the annual product instead of
one-third, is a money-making proposi-
tion for the buying interests since
they have made the association man
carry the tobacco worth approximately
\$4,000,000 for six months, thus sav-
ing their interest on borrowed money,
insurance, storage, depreciation in
weight, the deterrent to progress ap-
pears always to be the cash.

The following approximate may
prove of interest: The association
handled \$48,000,000 of growers' money,
inclusive of the 1913 crop. Four cents
was an extreme of the average paid
for tobacco by the several regu-
lary countries and the American Tobacco
Company, before there was an organiza-
tion, while the average price for a
number of seasons afterwards was dou-
bled, at times reaching 9 and 10 cents.
One per cent (not one cent) was the
commission charged by the associa-
tion on sales, no initiation fees, annual
dues, or assessments. In order to be
conservative, instead of saving the
increased circulation of money was
the difference in the aggregate sales
at 4 cents and at 8 cents, suppose we
say that one-third of the aggregate
amount represents the increased cir-
culation of money. This would make
\$16,000,000. If it made the increase in
price for the other two-thirds or the
non-association man it would be \$32,-
000,000, or an aggregate of increased
circulation of \$48,000,000. The offi-
cials of this association have gone into
every city and village, into every ham-
let and vale, traversed every stream
and public road in the dark tobacco
district with a purpose of acquainting
growers with the facts and the seri-
ousness of the situation. Tens of
thousands of circular letters have
been sent to their very firesides, ex-
plaining facts, as viewed by other
growers, and in the light of experi-
ence, urging support of an organiza-
tion.

The management has time and again
explained that having sale control of
but one-third of the annual product
was an injustice alike to management
and grower. The tobacco sold, ulti-
mately, at a price put upon it by the
association. The reason was that there
was a consumer for every pound of
it at a very handsome profit to the
middle man, and notwithstanding this
definite demand and this handsome
profit, enabled the association to make
such price, it did not prevent the buy-
ing interests discriminating, buying
association tobacco last at association
prices, but forcing the association man
to pay expenses that the other two-
thirds of growers were relieved of,
although receiving apparently as good
price as was paid the association man.

If a plan could have been devised
by which nobody had to pay commis-
sions, storage charges, insurance on
borrowed money, or suffer delay in
sale, the management would have
been highly pleased. Such a plan is
practically possible, and could be op-
erated for the benefit of all concerned
by enlisting eighty-five or ninety per

cent of growers and by his understand-
ing that the greatest benefit a grower
can provide himself and his household
is by making the scope, and strength
of his co-operative sales agency suf-
ficient to contemplate the protection
of all growers, instead of a willingness
to sidetrack the association when an
alluring offer of one-half, or one cent
per pound more is proposed to dis-
suade him from joining next time or
to induce him to violate association
rules, so as to disatisfy others with a
purpose of getting them to abandon
the association or fail to enlist next
time. With a three-fourths or two-
thirds enlistment commissions which
have heretofore been only one per
cent could easily be reduced to one-
half of one per cent. But apparently
so many growers have hoped that
their failure to sustain the organiza-
tion would not be of importance that
each year has made it more difficult
to enlist a necessary working number.
This condition in the volume of busi-
ness was rectified by prizes and ware-
houses that have been charged with
inefficient work to compensate or to
speculation by secretly buying the to-
bacco they were pricing, but allowing
it to go through the books in the name
of the grower. This has created skep-
ticism, and resentment, which of
course was benefiting the cause of
buying interests.

The strategy of the buying interests
has been leading to the destruction of
the fortress of the grower in which
his prices were made and insured. Of
course they desired the market, abso-
lutely under their domination again,
as would any other great interest in
business to make money.

It has not been forgotten that prac-
tically a million dollars was spent by
buying interests with such a purpose
in the contest for supremacy of the
English market, which resulted in
amalgamation after they decided both
might be wrecked by a further struggle.

Immediately before the advent of
the association, the method of destroy-
ing competition in Germany and En-
gland was to sell tobacco for less money
alongside every consignment without
regard to how low it sold until their
competitors were driven from the field
ruined, when it would be easy to re-
coup their losses by advancing the
price the consumer paid.

The mass of growers (although there
has never been an attack upon the
purpose or methods or success of the
association), have been indifferent
alike to support of the industry which
was created to protect them, or the
one which was approaching stealthily
and would ultimately destroy them by
receiving a lion's share of what profit
the industry afforded.

If the association had been given
sale control of two-thirds of the annual
product by a willingness on the part
of practically all growers to carry
their part of the burden, there would
have been no burden. The commission
would have been insignificant and
there would have been no delay be-
yond that of selling other tobacco.
There have been many "ifs" and
"buts," all of which had their origin
in an insufficiency of tobacco as com-
pared with what the opposition was
supplied with. If prices remain satis-
factory without organization, there is
nothing to be said in behalf of orga-
nization during such time. But our
thought must be riveted to the future,
and not the past. Above all things,
we must avoid harboring animosity
because of a difference of view with
reference to this matter. We must
remember there are many men who
are as good as the best of us who en-
tertain different views. We are citi-
zens of a common country, living un-
der the same flag. If we have made
mistakes in the past, we should avoid
making the same mistakes again.

It is impossible for anybody to know
within five to eight thousand hogs
heads of what the association would
handle any season. Not only the acre-
age of the association man when
pledging, but the weight when hous-
ing are approximates. Likewise the acre-
age of the non-association man, and
his weights when housing are approxi-
mates, and about which we know very
little. If the amount under associa-
tion sale control should prove of little
enough importance that buying inter-
ests were indifferent about it for a sea-
son, and especially as they know they
would get it ultimately, while non-as-
sociation men had enjoyed the pro-
ceeds of their sales, it would result in
disaster, and very possibly worse, a
panic. It has heretofore been as nec-
essary that the association's manage-
ment safeguard such an eventuality as
that banks safeguard their depositors
by sufficient reserves in their vaults,
and having suffered no evil results
from errors of this nature in the past,
there is no disposition to hazard a
greater chance hereafter.

Co-operative sales were discontinued
because, while not challenging any
man's right to do as he sees proper
with reference to his own affairs, one-
third of the growers, which includes
the association's management of ap-
proximately five hundred men, are un-
willing to longer carry the responsi-
bility and burden of maintaining it.

Whenever growers in sufficient
number decide upon the need of an
organization and are willing to act in
concert in the making of it, an asso-
ciation could be made which doubtless
would prove highly beneficial to the
tobacco growing industry as a whole.
Notwithstanding some disadvantages,
and imperfections in this one, which
all things considered has been won-
derfully successful and at an expense,
which so far as the individual was
concerned, was negligible.

The affairs and effects of the asso-
ciation are in the custody of Mr. T. L.
Hughes, Secretary, Clarksville, Tenn.,
who will attend to business of any na-
ture connected with it.

In bidding the many thousands of
growers adieu who have honored me
with their confidence, and shown me
every courtesy, and in parting with
comrades who have striven with equal
zeal and determination for the general
uplift, a feeling of sadness possesses me.
Twelve years is a long period of
one's life. I thank them and with
them go goodspeed. If my personal effort
has proven of value to my country, I
shall cherish the thought. I have done
my best, often under very trying and
unpleasant conditions.

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sunflower grown in Siberia, which can
support thirty-five times its own
weight when on the water. Cork, on
the other hand, has a buoyancy of
only one to five, and reindeer's hair
one to ten.

Following Offer

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Daily Evening Post to Jan. 1
Home and Farm Six months
Kentucky Governor's Wall Map,
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